Urban Growth Centres in the Greater Golden Horseshoe

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Ontario Growth Secretariat
Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal

Issue I

Winter 2005

105-03299/

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SECTION 1

Introduction

The Greater Golden Horseshoe encompasses Ontario's fastest-growing communities. It is estimated that the region can expect growth of 3.7 million new people and almost 1.8 million new jobs by 2031 (*The Outlook for Growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area*, Hemson Consulting Ltd., January 2005).

In October 2004, Bill 136, the Places to Grow Act was introduced in the Ontario Legislature. Under the proposed act, a Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe would identify areas to protect, areas to encourage intensification, and priority infrastructure investments to serve current and future needs.

Urban growth centres (UGCs) are key areas designated for accommodating future growth and intensification in the draft Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

This report describes 25 proposed UGCs. It focuses on the characteristics of each area that have led to its designation, and should be read in conjunction with the draft Growth Plan. The draft Growth Plan can be found at www.pir.gov.on.ca.

UGCs are typically core metropolitan areas and significant economic hubs that serve as destinations with a regional focus. They currently have or are planned to have high- and medium-density residential areas, mixed-use areas, office areas, retail areas, and regeneration areas. They perform a regional services function, and as such have good inter-regional transportation connections (transit and/or automobile).

Because of these characteristics, they are ideally positioned to accommodate significant growth and intensification. Conversely, increased intensification supported by appropriate public investment and action in these areas will strengthen these characteristics, making the centres more vibrant, transit supportive, and attractive to investment.

History of Planning for Urban Centres in the Greater Golden Horseshoe

A variety of proposals for regional networks of centres linked by corridors have been put forward in response to escalating growth pressures in the GTA over the past few decades.

In 1992, the Office for the Greater Toronto Area released ***GTA 2021 – The Challenge of Our Future***, a report that recommended an urban structure for the Greater Toronto Area comprised of a regional network of nodes linked by corridors that are served by higher order public transit. This report identified five major nodes and 23 intermediate nodes within the GTA.

In 1997, the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) further advanced the concept by reviewing the progress that had been achieved, concluding that municipal policy had been more successful in identifying and planning for nodes than for corridors. The CUI recommended a focus on those nodes offering the greatest development potential.

In 2001, the Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario (RPCO) called for a long-term coordinated approach to create 17 nodes across the GTA, connected by transportation corridors. These 17 nodes were refined through a consultative process with member municipalities and established criteria that would measure progress towards increasing densities (both employment and residential), increasing transit accessibility, and achieving greater mixed-use development.

This was mirrored in the work of the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel in 2003 in its report ***Shape the Future*** and the geography was expanded to include 27 nodes throughout the Greater Golden Horseshoe to reflect the larger geography of the Central Zone study area.

The province released a discussion paper, ***Places to Grow: Better Choices. Brighter Future***, in summer 2004. It incorporated the work of both the RPCO and the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel, and identified 26 proposed priority and emerging urban centres.

The following 25 proposed urban growth centres will form the basis for a network of centres well distributed across the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and linked by higher order transit and economic corridors.

Downtown Barrie
Downtown Brampton
Downtown Brantford
Downtown Burlington
Downtown Cambridge
Etobicoke Centre
Downtown Guelph
Downtown Hamilton
Downtown Kitchener
Markham Centre
Downtown Milton
Mississauga City Centre
Newmarket Centre
North York Centre
Midtown Oakville
Downtown Oshawa
Downtown Peterborough
Downtown Pickering
Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway
Scarborough Centre
Downtown St. Catharines
Downtown Toronto
Vaughan Corporate Centre
Uptown Waterloo
Yonge-Eglinton Centre

The analysis presented here builds on the "priority urban centres" and "emerging urban centres" originally proposed in the *Places to Grow* discussion paper (summer 2004). Comments received during public consultations and additional data collected since that time have been incorporated into this final set of proposed urban growth centres.

Further analysis of each UGC will be required as detailed plans are developed to achieve the growth and intensification targets proposed in the draft Growth Plan. It is anticipated that this analysis, including refinement of each UGC boundary, will be done through the proposed sub-area growth strategy process.

Analysis

In this paper, urban growth centres have been defined and identified building on work to date and using a combination of qualitative and quantitative criteria.

The priority and emerging centres proposed in the *Places to Grow* discussion paper (summer 2004) were used as a starting point. "Priority" centres were those that had been recognized as already-functioning urban centres providing regional services, containing existing infrastructure and with established transportation linkages. "Emerging" centres were those that have been identified in municipal planning documents or have partial characteristics of regional centres. They have the potential over the next 30 years to evolve into full regional centres and accommodate significant growth, provided the right investments are made. Based on comments received during consultations on the discussion paper, "priority" and "emerging" urban centres were combined into a single category.

The first step was to delineate a working boundary for each UGC. Municipal policy documents (e.g., official plans) were reviewed for the approximate boundary of the proposed centre, which frequently corresponded to a municipally designated "regional node", "mixed-use area" or "urban centre". Census tracts were then grouped to match the area. The boundaries should be considered approximate, as many municipal maps contained conceptual boundaries only. Census tracts were not divided, but were included if the majority of the tract included part of the proposed centre.

In general, the UGC areas are quite large, ranging from 3 km² (Yonge-Eglinton) to 26 km² (Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway) with a median area of 9 km². The areas tend to include both main streets and central business districts – places where intensification is desired – as well as nearby residential neighbourhoods where it may not be desired. The UGC boundaries will require further refinement and will likely become smaller through more detailed planning.

For each UGC, total residential and employment populations were tabulated using Statistics Canada 2001 Census data, and densities were calculated using gross area figures. Combined residential and employment densities range from a high of 233 people/hectare (downtown Toronto) to a low of 25 people/hectare (Vaughan Corporate Centre). The range in densities is in part due to the boundaries chosen for each UGC, but also reflect the fact that several proposed UGCs have been identified for their future potential over the next 30 years, and are not necessarily functioning as urban centres today.

Municipal water and wastewater usage and capacity was calculated using data collected from individual water and wastewater treatment facilities in the GGH since 1999. Where data was available it applied to the entire municipality and was not available for the UGC area. The per cent of capacity currently being used was generated by comparing average daily flow to total rated capacity. This information did not factor into designation as a UGC, but will be important in the next stage for calculating how much additional growth each centre can accommodate and what investment and infrastructure is required.

Transportation linkages are another important factor in determining a UGC's ability to accommodate future growth. Transportation infrastructure was ranked as high, medium or low, based on a review of the following characteristics:

- Inter-regional transportation links;
  - A GO Transit station;
  - A VIA Rail station;
  - A link to the regional highway network (i.e. 400-series highway).

- Local transit links;
  - A local public transit terminal/station.
- Easy transportation access to borders and international airports.

Urban growth centres are also expected to perform a role as a regional service centre. A full range of institutional, cultural and commercial facilities is necessary to attract both jobs and people and make transit investment cost-effective. Again, the regional service function was ranked as high, medium or low based on a review of:

- health care facilities (e.g., hospitals)
- post-secondary education facilities (e.g., universities, colleges)
- entertainment facilities (e.g., theatre, film and music venues)
- cultural facilities (e.g., history museums, art galleries)
- government services (e.g., city halls, provincial court houses, federal offices)

Three of the proposed UGCs have combined densities over 100 and also ranked high for transportation and regional services: downtown Toronto, downtown Hamilton, and Yonge-Eglinton Centre. Three others have combined densities over 60 (generally considered adequate to support basic transit) and also ranked high for transportation and regional services: Mississauga City Centre, North York Centre and Scarborough Centre.

Most of the other UGCs do not yet have high densities, but based on the assessment of transportation infrastructure and/or provision of regional services, they demonstrate an existing role as an urban centre and are well positioned to perform an increased role in the future. They are downtown Brampton, downtown Brantford, downtown Burlington, Etobicoke Centre, downtown Milton, downtown Guelph, downtown Kitchener/uptown Waterloo, downtown Oshawa, midtown Oakville, Markham Centre, Newmarket Centre, downtown Peterborough, and downtown St. Catharines.

The remaining five proposed UGCs have both low densities, and less transportation and regional service infrastructure. They have been identified as UGCs for their future potential to accommodate growth and intensification. For example, downtown Barrie is well positioned to accommodate the significant growth forecasted for Simcoe County over the next 30 years. Highway access is good and inter-regional transit linkages are planned. Encouraging intensification and investment in downtown Barrie will increase densities to support the proposed GO Transit rail link. Supporting employment growth in this UGC will be important for its long-term health as a self-contained mixed-use community.

Downtown Cambridge is another area that has been identified as having the potential to function as an urban centre for the large population increases forecasted for the Region of Waterloo. Its location near the Hwy 401 trade corridor, as well as the existing capacity and presence of some regional amenities, are the primary reasons for designation of downtown Cambridge as an UGC.

Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway and Vaughan Corporate Centre have been identified in municipal planning documents and in the Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario *Nodes and Corridors in the Greater Toronto Area* report as areas to direct some of the significant growth forecasted for York Region. There are also a number of plans to link these future centres with others by high order transit, which will greatly increase their capacity to accommodate balanced growth at the desired densities.

Downtown Pickering does not currently have densities and infrastructure to function as a regional centre and therefore ranks fairly low. However, its proximity to the planned Pickering Airport, the planned development of the nearby Seaton Lands, and its recognition in municipal planning documents as a large node in Durham Region (second to Oshawa) – all indicate future potential to support significant intensification.

The *Places to Grow* discussion paper also proposed downtown Niagara Falls and downtown Fort Erie as urban centres. However, while they exhibit some characteristics of UGCs, particularly with respect to transportation infrastructure and proximity to international borders, Niagara Region is expecting modest growth and therefore would likely not support multiple UGCs in such proximity to each other.

Moreover, the draft Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe currently proposes to treat these two communities – Niagara Falls and Fort Erie – and the area around them as part of a different designation of "gateway economic zone", recognizing their unique situation at the border.

The profiles found in Section 2 include the information and assessments for each of the final recommended urban growth centres.

Future Analysis

Of necessity, this analysis has been done at a fairly large scale. In order to more accurately gauge the future potential to accommodate growth in each urban growth centres, and the investment required to support intensification, some further analysis will be necessary. This may involve:

- further refinement of UGC boundary delineation
- an examination of land availability and redevelopment opportunities that exist within each UGC
- examination of specific infrastructure usage and capacities within each UGC (including transit and transportation, education, health care, water and wastewater treatment, waste disposal and social service facilities)
- development of a monitoring process and measures to assess success.

In each case this will involve more detailed joint planning with municipalities, as proposed in the draft Growth Plan for the preparation of sub-area growth strategies.

SECTION 2

List of Urban Growth Centres in the Greater Golden Horseshoe

Downtown Barrie
Downtown Brampton
Downtown Brantford
Downtown Burlington
Downtown Cambridge
Etobicoke Centre
Downtown Guelph
Downtown Hamilton
Downtown Kitchener/Uptown Waterloo
Markham Centre
Downtown Milton
Mississauga City Centre
Newmarket Centre
North York Centre
Midtown Oakville
Downtown Oshawa
Downtown Peterborough
Downtown Pickering
Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway
Scarborough Centre
Downtown St. Catharines
Downtown Toronto
Vaughan Corporate Centre
Yonge-Eglinton Centre

Location of Urban Growth Centres in the Greater Golden Horseshoe

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Greater Golden Horseshoe Urban Growth Centre Profiles

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UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	20,700	increase of
2001	21,000	+ 1.4 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	1,000	hectares
Residential Density	21.0	residents per hectare
Employment Density	14.4	jobs per hectare
Total Density	35.4	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	◯	LOW
Regional Facilities	◐	MEDIUM
Water	41%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	97%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Downtown Barrie

Barrie is the northernmost urban centre identified in *Places to Grow*, located at the western tip of Lake Simcoe approximately 100 km north of Toronto. Recent rapid population growth in the broader city (30% between 1996 and 2001) provides an opportunity to support increased intensification in the downtown, which has grown at a much slower pace.

Downtown Barrie has been identified as an UGC primarily because of its potential regional role north of the Oak Ridges Moraine, its position as a transportation gateway to the northern parts of the province, and the city's recent and projected rapid growth.

Downtown Barrie grew by 1.4% to 21,000 people over the period from 1996 to 2001 at densities of 21 residents and 14.4 jobs per hectare in 2001.

The city is linked to Toronto by a single transportation corridor, Hwy 400, and is not served by either VIA rail or GO Transit rail service at the present time.

Regional services within close proximity to the downtown include the Royal Victoria Hospital, Georgian College and the provincial courthouse.

The latest infrastructure capacity data indicates that the city of Barrie is at 41% of total water capacity and 97% of total wastewater treatment capacity.

Source: City of Barrie

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Downtown Brampton

Developed around the junction of two railway lines, downtown Brampton has been a regional centre since the city was incorporated in 1853 and yet has retained much of its small town atmosphere.

With 42.5 residents and 13 jobs per hectare, the downtown has combined densities well above those for the Region of Peel. The downtown grew by 5.8% to 55,000 residents from 1996 to 2001.

The downtown is a significant transportation and transit node for the region. The rail terminal, located within the downtown, serves the Kitchener-Guelph-Toronto VIA rail line in addition to the Georgetown-Toronto GO Transit rail line. The downtown is accessible to Hwy 410 and Hwy 401. Additionally, the centre is located in close proximity to Pearson International Airport.

Downtown Brampton provides many broad regional services and is home to City Hall, the Peel Heritage Complex, Peel Memorial Hospital as well as recreation facilities.

Data is not available on the city's water supply capacity or wastewater treatment infrastructure capacity.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	52,000	increase of
2001	55,000	+ 5.8 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	1,290	hectares
Residential Density	42.5	residents per hectare
Employment Density	13.0	jobs per hectare
Total Density	55.5	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	not available	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	not available	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Source: Regional Municipality of Peel

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UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	16,100	decrease of
2001	16,000	- 0.6 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	597	hectares
Residential Density	26.8	residents per hectare
Employment Density	15.8	jobs per hectare
Total Density	42.6	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	◐	MEDIUM
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	not available	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	100%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Downtown Brantford

The city of Brantford is an excellent example of a largely self-contained community that provides a number of regional services to smaller communities in the southwestern portion of the Greater Golden Horseshoe. It has been identified as an UGC primarily due to this regional function and its connection and position along a major trade corridor (Hwy 403 linking Hwy 401 and the QEW).

The downtown exhibits densities of 26.8 residents and 15.8 jobs per hectare, and the population remained steady at approximately 16,000 residents between 1996 and 2001. The city's overall population increased by 2% during the same period.

The downtown is located just 1 km south of Hwy 403, the major transportation corridor for the county. Brantford Transit serves the city with two routes. GO Transit rail service does not extend to Brantford, but VIA rail operates service to a station located within the urban growth centre.

All of the main administrative functions for the city and county reside within the downtown. The downtown also has a hospital, a school for the blind, a number of museums and convention facilities.

The city of Brantford is presently at 100% of wastewater treatment capacity. Data for water capacity is unavailable.

Source: City of Brantford

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Downtown Burlington

With densities of 27.1 residents and 17.1 jobs per hectare, downtown Burlington currently exhibits borderline transit supportive densities, although the centre decreased in population by 1.7% between 1996 and 2001 to 11,300 residents.

Located at the junction of two major transportation corridors, Hwy 403 and the QEW, the centre is an important regional transit node. GO Transit rail service and a regional bus service station located within the centre position the downtown to accommodate future intensification.

The centre is home to Burlington City Hall and offers significant cultural amenities in the form of museums, art galleries and convention facilities.

In terms of infrastructure capacity, the city of Burlington is at an average of 35% of total water capacity and at 71% of wastewater treatment capacity, indicating that the downtown could accommodate significant intensification in the future.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	11,500	decrease of
2001	11,300	- 1.7 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	416	hectares
Residential Density	27.1	residents per hectare
Employment Density	17.1	jobs per hectare
Total Density	44.2	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	◐	MEDIUM
Water	35%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	71%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

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Downtown Cambridge

Downtown Cambridge grew by 6.2% during the period 1996 to 2001, to 12,000 residents. The downtown exhibits moderate densities of 17 residents and 12.7 jobs per hectare. There is a significant opportunity to utilize existing infrastructure capacity to cost-effectively accommodate new growth.

The downtown is located close to Hwy 401, the major transportation corridor through the Region of Waterloo. Grand River Transit offers modest bus services throughout the city. Neither Via Rail nor GO Transit currently offer rail service to Cambridge.

The downtown offers significant cultural amenities and a wide variety of heritage buildings, in addition to some local services including municipal offices and a hospital. Its location near the Hwy 401 trade corridor, as well as the existing capacity and regional amenities, are the primary reasons for designation of downtown Cambridge as an UGC.

Water capacity data is unavailable for the city of Cambridge; however, it operates at a very low 51% of its wastewater treatment capacity.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	11,300	increase of
2001	12,000	+ 6.2 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	704	hectares
Residential Density	17.0	residents per hectare
Employment Density	12.7	jobs per hectare
Total Density	29.7	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	○	LOW
Regional Facilities	◐	MEDIUM
Water	not available	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	51%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Source: Regional Municipality of Waterloo

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UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	25,400	increase of
2001	26,200	+ 3.1 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	1,500	hectares
Residential Density	17.4	residents per hectare
Employment Density	25.8	jobs per hectare
Total Density	43.2	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	○	LOW
Water	60%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	97%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Etobicoke Centre

The city of Toronto has identified Etobicoke Centre as a secondary plan area in the latest draft Toronto Official Plan, with the objective of advancing the area as the "primary focus for the west end of the city for a broad spectrum of uses and activities".

Between 1996 and 2001, Etobicoke Centre grew by 3.1% to 26,200 residents. This area is characterized primarily by retail uses and high-density residential uses and exhibits densities of 17.4 residents and 25.8 jobs per hectare. Recent high-density residential development activity since 2001 should significantly increase the future residential density in this centre. The presence of a number of vacant or underutilized industrial sites in this centre offers significant opportunities for redevelopment.

Transportation and transit accessibility are the greatest features of this centre, as the TTC subway system's two most westerly stations, Kipling and Islington stations, are within this centre, in addition to a GO Transit rail and bus station.

Etobicoke Centre is located in very close proximity to two major transportation corridors, the Gardiner Expressway/QEW and Hwy 427. Additionally, the centre is located in close proximity to Pearson International Airport.

While data is not available on the infrastructure capacity of this particular centre, data for the city of Toronto indicates that on a daily average, water provision is at 60% of capacity and wastewater treatment is at 97%.

Source: City of Toronto

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UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	11,600	decrease of
2001	11,600	- 0.1 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	400	hectares
Residential Density	29.2	residents per hectare
Employment Density	22.2	jobs per hectare
Total Density	51.4	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	◐	MEDIUM
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	not available	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	92%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Downtown Guelph

Guelph is a town that is rich in both cultural and institutional amenities. Guelph's downtown is home to regional and municipal offices, two hospitals, a number of small museums and galleries, and an extensive array of heritage structures. The University of Guelph is the largest employer in the downtown.

The downtown exhibits densities of 29.2 residents and 22.2 jobs per hectare. The downtown population remained stable at about 11,600 residents between 1996 and 2001.

Guelph is located approximately 4 km north of Hwy 401, the major transportation corridor in the region. Guelph is serviced by VIA rail and by inter-regional bus service. Local bus service is generally oriented towards the student population.

Water infrastructure capacity data for the city of Guelph is unavailable, but wastewater treatment is at 92% of average daily capacity.

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UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	26,300	increase of
2001	28,200	+ 7.2 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	420	hectares
Residential Density	66.6	residents per hectare
Employment Density	66.9	jobs per hectare
Total Density	133.5	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	14%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	79%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Downtown Hamilton

Downtown Hamilton showed steady growth of 7.2% to over 28,000 residents from 1996 to 2001 and exhibits high and balanced densities of 66.6 residents and 66.9 jobs per hectare.

Downtown Hamilton is located at the base of the Niagara Escarpment in close proximity to the QEW, a major transportation corridor that provides access to the US/Canada border. The downtown is a regionally significant transit hub with a GO Transit rail stop and a local transit system terminal. Munro International Airport is located approximately 5 km south of the downtown.

There are significant redevelopment opportunities outside the downtown particularly along the waterfront where there are a number of brownfield sites.

Notably, the downtown contains a pilot location to gauge the potential success of the Development Permit System in Ontario. Hamilton's Downtown Secondary Plan outlines a strategy to encourage intensification in the core.

Downtown Hamilton offers a number of broad regional level services including municipal offices, convention facilities, museums and art galleries, and the downtown is in very close proximity to McMaster University, McMaster Medical Centre, Mohawk College and a number of hospitals and health institutions.

The latest infrastructure data indicates that the city of Hamilton is at a remarkably low 14% of total water capacity and 79% of wastewater treatment capacity.

Source: City of Hamilton

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UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	29,100	increase of
2001	29,800	+ 2.4 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	1,190	hectares
Residential Density	25.1	residents per hectare
Employment Density	27.4	jobs per hectare
Total Density	52.5	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	not available	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	53%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Downtown Kitchener / Uptown Waterloo

Downtown Kitchener/ uptown Waterloo grew by 2.4% during the period 1996 through 2001 to 29,800 residents. The King St. priority corridor exhibits densities of 25.1 residents and 27.4 jobs per hectare. These densities support the local Grand River Transit system.

The downtown is serviced by an integrated bus terminal that serves both local transit and regional bus lines, as well as a VIA Rail station that provides service to Guelph, Brampton and Toronto in the east, and Stratford and London in the west. The King St. corridor, linking Hwy 86 in the north to Hwy 7/8 in the south, is located a short distance from Hwy 401. Waterloo Airport, approximately 10 km east, has recently begun offering international flights.

Downtown Kitchener is home to municipal and provincial offices and significant cultural amenities with a performance centre – Centre in the Square – as well as a number of art galleries and museums.

The area is rapidly becoming a cluster for innovation in information technology and has shown extensive development activity over the past 15 years. Sir Wilfred Laurier University, the University of Waterloo and Conestoga College account for approximately one-tenth of all jobs in the city.

City Hall and the city's administrative building are located within uptown Waterloo, in addition to Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital, which is located near the border of the two cities.

Water in the region is provided through a number of integrated sources. Data on total water capacity is unavailable, but wastewater treatment data indicates that the city of Waterloo is at 53% of total treatment capacity.

Source: Regional Municipality of Waterloo

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Markham Centre

Markham's downtown was designed to accommodate future growth. During the period 1996 to 2001, Markham Centre grew by 22.9% to 73,500 residents. While the centre exhibits residential densities of 36.8 people per hectare, the centre has much lower employment densities of only 7.6 jobs per hectare.

Unionville GO Transit rail station is located south of the centre, and York Region Transit services this centre with three bus routes. Further to the south, Hwy 407 serves the centre as the major transportation corridor in the vicinity and Highway 404 is located a short distance east of the centre.

The centre offers significant development opportunity, particularly so for employment uses due to an abundance of available employment land.

While Markham Civic Centre is located in the centre, few broad regional services are located in the centre at this time. Markham has two hospitals, both outside of the centre. Markham Centre is the home to IBM Canada's National Head Office, with approximately 7,000 employees.

Data is presently unavailable for water and wastewater treatment capacity for the Town of Markham.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	59,800	increase of
2001	73,500	+ 22.9 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	2,000	hectares
Residential Density	36.8	residents per hectare
Employment Density	7.6	jobs per hectare
Total Density	44.4	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	○	LOW
Water	not available	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	not available	of existing capacity*

* city wide

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UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	22,400	decrease of
2001	21,900	- 2.2 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	840	hectares
Residential Density	26.2	residents per hectare
Employment Density	8.1	jobs per hectare
Total Density	34.3	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	◖	MEDIUM
Water	not available	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	96%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Downtown Milton

The steady pace of residential growth in Milton since the 2001 census will likely prove to be a catalyst for intensification in the downtown in future years.

In 2001, downtown Milton exhibited densities of 26.2 residents and 8.1 jobs per hectare, symptomatic of the high portion of Milton residents that commute beyond city limits to work. Both the downtown and the town of Milton as a whole have shown a decrease in population of 2.2% and 2% respectively, between 1996 and 2001. In 2001 the population of downtown Milton was 21,900 residents.

The most recent statistics from the town indicate that the 2004 population is approaching 50,000 residents. With the recent addition of lake based water infrastructure, Milton has allowed for expansion of greenfield residential development.

The downtown is located in close proximity to one major transportation corridor, Hwy 401. Milton Transit offers limited local service. The town is serviced by a GO Transit rail station, located within the downtown. This inter-regional transit service, as well as the increased infrastructure capacity and its role providing regional services to North Halton are the main reasons why downtown Milton has been identified as a focus for intensification.

The downtown offers cultural amenities as Milton has managed to retain an active main street.

Notably, Milton has recently begun the Ecotech Village project, which attempts to integrate environmental sustainable design with economic viability.

Data is unavailable for Milton's total water capacity. The latest provincial infrastructure data indicates that the town of Milton is at 96% of total wastewater treatment capacity.

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Mississauga City Centre

Mississauga City Centre grew by 11.1% between 1996 and 2001 to 41,200 residents. At 53.7 residents and 29.2 employees per hectare, Mississauga City Centre exhibits transit supportive densities and an increasingly varied mix of uses. The centre is a regionally significant transit and transportation hub, as the primary transit terminal is within the centre and a major transportation corridor abuts the centre to the north, Hwy 403. Located 1.5 km south of the centre is a GO Transit rail and bus terminal.

Although not yet fully pedestrian oriented, the 8 km² centre has become increasingly intensified by the introduction of cultural facilities and high-density residential development and by further intensifying existing retail land uses. The 1992 Mississauga City Centre Secondary Plan outlined the steps toward integrating civic, retail, office and other facilities in this manner.

The centre provides some broad regional services with Mississauga City Hall, Square One shopping centre and Mississauga's Living Arts Centre serving as major attractors to the area. There is a university campus located in close proximity to the centre and Mississauga General Hospital is located 3 km south of the centre. Additionally, the centre is located in very close proximity to Pearson International Airport.

Large vacant land holdings as well as small vacant parcels of land are available within the centre, offering a variety of opportunities for new development. The latest infrastructure capacity data suggests that the city of Mississauga, on average, is at 45% of total water capacity and is at 85% of wastewater treatment capacity.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	37,100	increase of
2001	41,200	+ 11.1 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	770	hectares
Residential Density	53.7	residents per hectare
Employment Density	29.2	jobs per hectare
Total Density	82.9	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	45%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	85%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

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UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	27,900	decrease of
2001	27,500	- 1.4 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	990	hectares
Residential Density	27.8	residents per hectare
Employment Density	11.1	jobs per hectare
Total Density	38.9	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	◐	MEDIUM
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	45%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	not available	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Newmarket Centre

The population of Newmarket Centre decreased by 1.4% to 27,500 residents between 1996 and 2001. The centre exhibits densities of 11.1 jobs and 27.8 residents per hectare.

This employment-to-population density ratio is characteristic of a number of GGH growth centres, where a high proportion of residents are commuting to jobs located outside the town.

Newmarket Centre's regional transit hub is located adjacent to the city hall and offers a GO Transit rail station and is serviced by two regional bus routes. Adjacent to the centre to the east, Hwy 404 serves as the major transportation corridor for the town.

The town offers a wide assortment of broad regional services including York Region's offices, the York Region District Courts, Newmarket City Hall, and York County Hospital. The regional service function for communities in York Region and south Simcoe, as well as the transportation access are the primary reasons for identifying Newmarket Centre as a focus for growth and intensification.

The town of Newmarket currently is at 45% of total water provision capacity. Data is unavailable for the town's wastewater treatment capacity.

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North York Centre

North York Centre exhibits transit-supportive densities of 43.5 residents and 27.7 jobs per hectare. This centre grew by 23.4% to 41,700 residents from 1996 to 2001.

With the recent addition to Toronto's transit system of the Sheppard subway line and the proximity to Hwy 401, North York Centre is poised to become a major transit and transportation hub over the next 30 years. This is supported by recent intensification and new development along Sheppard Ave., which has been exhibiting an increasingly varied mix of uses.

Broad regional level services are available in this 10 km^2 centre, including a number of provincial and local government offices as well as the Toronto Centre for the Arts.

Water and wastewater infrastructure data indicates that on a daily average, water provision is at 60% of capacity and wastewater treatment is at 97% for the city of Toronto.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	33,800	increase of
2001	41,700	+ 23.4 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	960	hectares
Residential Density	43.5	residents per hectare
Employment Density	27.7	jobs per hectare
Total Density	71.3	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	60%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	97%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Source: City of Toronto

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Midtown Oakville

Midtown Oakville exhibits densities of 22.2 residents and 11.9 jobs per hectare. Over the period from 1996 to 2001, population in the midtown core decreased by 0.9% to 21,800 residents.

The midtown serves as a regional transit hub by offering GO and Via Rail service, as well as local transit through Oakville Transit's 20-plus bus routes. Additionally, the QEW in the south serves as midtown Oakville's major transportation corridor.

The midtown core offers significant regional services including regional and municipal offices, provincial courts, police headquarters and Sheridan College. Additionally, the midtown core is located directly north of Old Oakville, which serves as a regional focal point.

Infrastructure capacity for the town of Oakville indicates that there is significant capacity, as the town is at 34% of water capacity and 59% of total wastewater treatment capacity.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	22,000	decrease of
2001	21,800	- 0.9 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	980	hectares
Residential Density	22.2	residents per hectare
Employment Density	11.9	jobs per hectare
Total Density	34.1	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	34%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	59%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

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UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	42,900	increase of
2001	42,900	+ 0.1 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	1,410	hectares
Residential Density	30.4	residents per hectare
Employment Density	16.5	jobs per hectare
Total Density	46.9	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	◐	MEDIUM
Regional Facilities	◐	MEDIUM
Water	57%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	87%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Downtown Oshawa

Downtown Oshawa has remained stable at about 42,900 residents over the period from 1996 and 2001, while the city of Oshawa grew by 4% over the same period, suggesting an increase in residential development in Oshawa's urban fringe. Densities in the centre are moderate at 30.4 residents and 16.5 jobs per hectare.

Oshawa offers GO Train and VIA rail service, located southwest of the centre, and the main transportation corridor through the centre is Hwy 401.

In close proximity to the 12 km² downtown there are a number of broad regional services available, including Oshawa's municipal offices, Oshawa Regional Airport and two hospitals. The University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT), which opened its doors in 2003, is located north of the downtown on the site of the former Durham College.

The city's economy is driven by one major employer – General Motors of Canada Ltd., which provides 20% of all jobs in Oshawa.

The latest infrastructure data indicates that the city of Oshawa is at 57% of total water capacity and at 87% of total wastewater treatment capacity.

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Downtown Peterborough

Downtown Peterborough exhibits densities of 29.8 residents and 21.3 jobs per hectare. Downtown Peterborough's population remained constant at about 16,700 residents from 1996 to 2001.

Peterborough is somewhat isolated from the GTA as there currently is no passenger rail service to the GTA. Inter-regional transit is therefore limited to bus transportation. Locally, all 11 of Peterborough Transit's bus routes travel to the main terminal located within the downtown. The major transportation corridor linking Peterborough to the rest of the GGH is Highway 115.

The downtown offers significant cultural amenities having an assortment of museums, art galleries and heritage buildings. Additionally, the downtown is home to municipal offices, and a college. Trent University is located approximately 6 km north of the downtown.

The town of Peterborough offers significant infrastructure capacity being at 38% of water capacity and 78% of wastewater treatment capacity.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	16,700	decrease of
2001	16,700	- 0.1 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	560	hectares
Residential Density	29.8	residents per hectare
Employment Density	21.3	jobs per hectare
Total Density	51.1	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	◐	MEDIUM
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	38%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	78%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Source: City of Peterborough

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Downtown Pickering

Downtown Pickering grew by 6.1% to 17,500 residents between 1996 and 2001. The downtown exhibits moderate densities of 35.5 residents and 15.7 jobs per hectare.

Hwy 401, the major transportation corridor for the city, divides the downtown and plans to extend Hwy 407 in the north through Durham Region are underway. Within the downtown, Pickering GO station offers rail service to downtown Toronto. The Ajax-Pickering Transit Authority provides limited bus service locally. The site of the future Pickering Airport will be located approximately 5 km northwest of the downtown.

There are broad level regional services in the downtown, most notably Pickering City Hall, the Pickering Recreational Complex, Pickering Corporate Centre and a number of marinas along the lakeshore.

The latest provincial infrastructure data indicates that on average the city of Pickering is at 26% of total water capacity, and 88% of total wastewater treatment capacity.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	16,500	increase of
2001	17,500	+ 6.1 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	490	hectares
Residential Density	35.5	residents per hectare
Employment Density	15.7	jobs per hectare
Total Density	51.2	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	◐	MEDIUM
Regional Facilities	○	LOW
Water	26%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	88%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

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Richmond Hill / Langstaff Gateway

This large centre has relatively low densities of 22.3 residents and 10.7 jobs per hectare. It grew by 14.5% to 58,500 people between 1996 and 2001. Lower employment densities are characteristic of many emerging centres, where a large proportion of residents are commuting to jobs outside the town.

Hwy 407 divides Richmond Hill/ Langstaff Gateway and the centre is located in close proximity to Hwy 404. The regional transit hub is located within the centre at Langstaff GO Transit station at the south of the centre. Two regional bus routes service the GO station locally.

Its location on Hwy 407 mid-way between Pearson International Airport and the planned Pickering Airport, as well as the GO Transit access and regional transportation linkages are the primary reasons for identifying Richmond Hill/Langstaff as an urban growth centre. There is opportunity to build on these assets and significantly increase densities in the centre.

Within this centre are very few broad regional services at the present time. Data is unavailable for water and wastewater treatment capacity for the town of Richmond Hill.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	51,100	increase of
2001	58,500	+ 14.5 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	2,630	hectares
Residential Density	22.3	residents per hectare
Employment Density	10.7	jobs per hectare
Total Density	33.0	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	◐	MEDIUM
Regional Facilities	○	LOW
Water	not available	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	not available	of existing capacity*

* city wide

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Scarborough Centre

With densities of 32.3 residents and 31 jobs per hectare, Scarborough Centre grew by 21.5% to 23,700 residents between 1996 and 2001.

The centre is a significant road transportation and regional transit hub, offering an LRT connection to the TTC subway and a location adjacent to Hwy 401. At the present time, the centre is largely oriented towards the automobile, although recent intensification contributes toward creating a more pedestrian friendly environment. A number of broad regional level services are located in the centre including recreational uses and education facilities.

The draft Toronto Official Plan contains provisions for this area to be "promoted as the governmental, cultural, business, retail, and transportation focus for the eastern City area."

While data is not available on the infrastructure capacity of this particular centre, data for the city of Toronto indicates that on a daily average, water provision is at 60% of total capacity and wastewater treatment is at 97% of total capacity.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	19,500	increase of
2001	23,700	+ 21.5 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	730	hectares
Residential Density	32.3	residents per hectare
Employment Density	31.0	jobs per hectare
Total Density	63.3	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	60%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	97%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

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Downtown St.Catharines

Downtown St. Catharines exhibits a balanced 27.9 residents and 27 jobs per hectare, but decreased in population by 1.5% to 20,200 residents during the period 1996 to 2001.

Framing the downtown are the QEW and Hwy 406, the major transportation corridors through the city, that head to the US/Canada border. VIA offers rail service at a station located just outside the downtown to the south. The St. Catharines Transit Commission boasts an extensive network of bus routes throughout the city, a function of high residential and job densities. The main bus terminal is centrally located within the downtown.

The downtown offers a number of broad regional level services including municipal offices and two hospitals. Brock University is located a short distance to the south of the downtown.

The city of St. Catharines is at a very low 35% of total water capacity, and a low 64% of wastewater treatment capacity.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	20,500	decrease of
2001	20,200	- 1.5 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	730	hectares
Residential Density	27.9	residents per hectare
Employment Density	27.0	jobs per hectare
Total Density	54.9	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	35%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	64%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

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UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	117,200	increase of
2001	126,800	+ 8.2 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	2,210	hectares
Residential Density	57.3	residents per hectare
Employment Density	176.1	jobs per hectare
Total Density	233.4	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	●	HIGH
Water	60%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	97%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Downtown Toronto

As Canada's largest urban centre, Toronto is the home to a wide range of employment activities of provincial, national and international significance. This centre corresponds to the area identified as "Downtown and Central Waterfront" in Toronto's draft official plan.

Downtown Toronto has seen a steady residential population increase between 1996 and 2001 of 8.2% to about 126,800 residents, with a population density of 57.3 residents per hectare. The downtown also boasts the highest job density in the Greater Golden Horseshoe of 176.1 jobs per hectare. These densities easily support an extensive transit system based around two subway lines and the Union Station GO Transit terminal.

As the city is almost completely built out, almost all future development will be infill redevelopment. Many of the 400 series highways in the GGH are oriented towards the city of Toronto, offering access to major trade corridors and border crossings.

The downtown is home to many of Ontario's regional, provincial and federal services, including government offices, hospitals, as well as two universities and a number of colleges and wide assortment of culturally significant facilities and institutions.

Water and wastewater infrastructure data indicates that on a daily average, water provision is at 60% of capacity and wastewater treatment is at 97% for the city of Toronto overall.

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Vaughan Corporate Centre

Vaughan Corporate Centre grew by 10% to 29,800 residents in 2001. With densities at 13.5 residents and 11.1 jobs per hectare in 2001, there is substantial opportunity for intensification in this centre.

Hwy 7 separates land uses in the centre with retail/commercial to the south and single family residential to the north.

The centre is located at the junction of two major transportation corridors, Hwy 407 and Hwy 400. Transit is limited to Hwy 7 and Weston Rd. bus routes as well as one peak period TTC bus route. Two major transit initiatives are proposed for the centre: York Region Transit's Hwy 7 BRT and TTC subway expansion.

Serving largely as a destination for commuters and retail shoppers, Vaughan Corporate Centre presently provides little broad regional level service and cultural amenity for the residents in the surrounding vicinity.

Infrastructure capacity data is unavailable for Vaughan.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	27,100	increase of
2001	29,800	+ 10.0 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	2,200	hectares
Residential Density	13.5	residents per hectare
Employment Density	11.1	jobs per hectare
Total Density	24.6	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	◐	MEDIUM
Regional Facilities	○	LOW
Water	not available	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	not available	of existing capacity*

* city wide

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Yonge-Eglinton Centre

The draft Toronto Official Plan identifies this 3 km² secondary plan area located at the intersection of Yonge St. and Eglinton Avenue in north Toronto. The centre has highly transit supportive densities of 110.5 residents and 94.4 jobs per hectare, attesting to the diverse mix of high-density residential, office and retail uses that are found at this intersection. This centre grew by 8.9% to 33,200 residents, between 1996 and 2001.

Yonge-Eglinton Centre does not offer broad regional level services, relying on downtown Toronto for many government, health and education facilities (in addition to higher order cultural facilities). However, there is significant employment activity located in this centre, including a number of corporate head offices and an abundance of office space.

While data is not available on the infrastructure capacity of this particular centre, data for the city of Toronto as a whole indicates that on a daily average, water provision is at 60% of total capacity and wastewater treatment is at 97% of total capacity.

UGC Population (people, rounded to nearest hundred)

1996	30,500	increase of
2001	33,200	+ 8.9 %

Area and Existing Densities

Area of UGC	300	hectares
Residential Density	110.5	residents per hectare
Employment Density	94.4	jobs per hectare
Total Density	204.9	jobs and residents per hectare

Existing Infrastructure and Services

Transit & Transportation	●	HIGH
Regional Facilities	◐	MEDIUM
Water	60%	of existing capacity*
Wastewater	97%	of existing capacity*

* city wide

Source: City of Toronto

Resources

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In addition, the information and many comments submitted during the public consultations in person or via mail or email from residents, stakeholders, and staff from other ministries, were taken into account in the analysis in this report.